

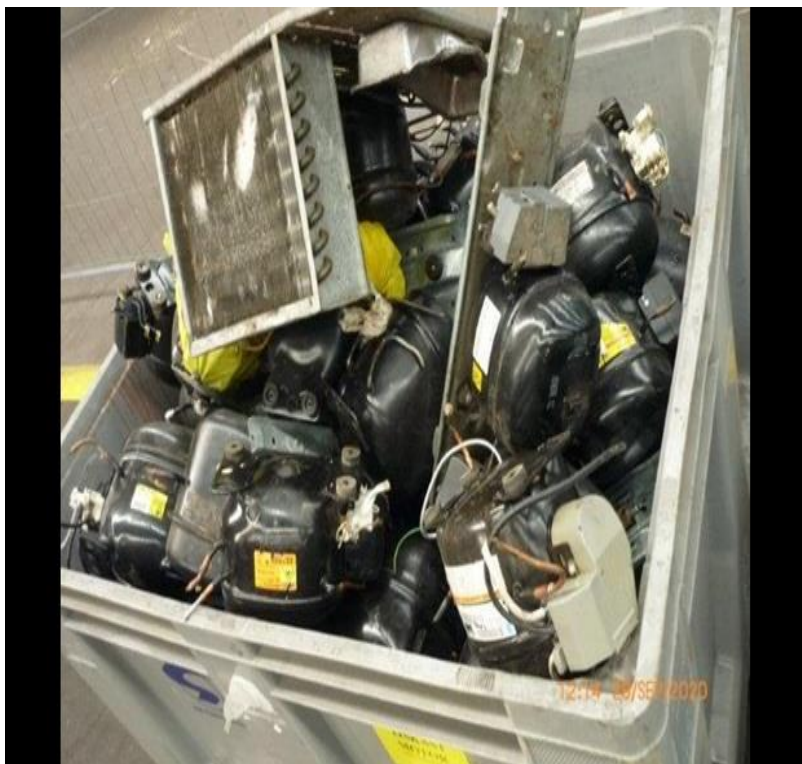


# The Green Customs Initiative

Presented at the Green Customs Capacity Building Workshop for Southeast Asia region, Halong City, 13-15 March, 2023

Jackline Wanja, Associate Legal Officer  
Montevideo Coordination and Delivery Unit, UNEP Law Division

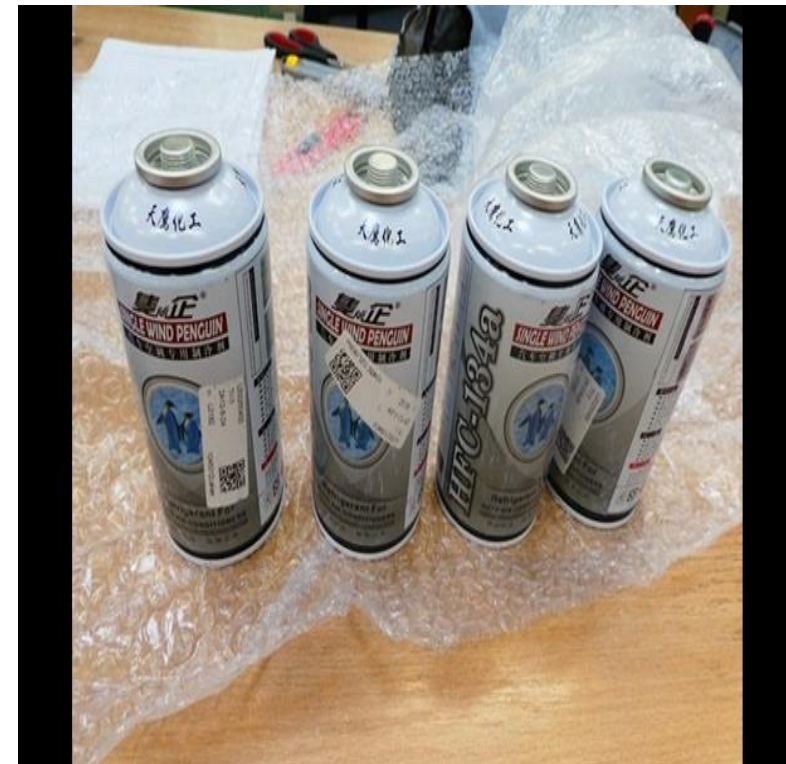
# Trade in environmentally sensitive commodities



Electronic waste



Ivory



HFC refrigerants

# A multilateral environmental agreement (MEA) is:



- **An agreement**
  - A legal instrument (legally binding)
  - Clear intention by the States to bind themselves in written form
- **Multilateral**
  - Between several States and governed by international law
- **Environmental**
  - Aims to achieve shared international environmental management and policy objectives.
  - Some MEAs include **trade provisions**

# Green customs

***Most illicit activities affecting the environment take place beyond national borders. By ensuring that the relevant laws are enforced at borders, customs and border control officers play a pivotal role in the enforcement chain, helping to protect citizens and the environment from the increasingly devastating effects of these activities.***

*Green Customs Guide to MEAs (UNEP, 2022)*

# Customs and practicalities of implementing MEAs

- Identification of suspicious items
- Potential involvement in investigation, seizure, storage and disposal
- Health and safety considerations
- Cooperation with other authorities
- Legal considerations
- Reporting cases of illegal traffic in environmentally sensitive items
- Raising awareness among public about measures to comply with MEAs

# What is the Green Customs Initiative (GCI)?

- **Partnership** of international entities (MEA secretariats, UNODC, other organizations) cooperating:
  - To prevent the **illegal trade** in environmentally-sensitive commodities and substances *and* to facilitate their legal trade
  - By targeting **customs** and other **border control officers**

# GCI partners



MINAMATA  
CONVENTION  
ON MERCURY



- **UNEP (acts as GCI secretariat)**
- **UNEP OzonAction**
- **Secretariat to Basel Convention**
- **Secretariat to Rotterdam Convention**
- **Secretariat to Stockholm Convention**
- **Secretariat to Minamata Convention**
- **Secretariat to Cartagena Protocol to Convention on Biological Diversity**
- **Secretariat to Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES)**
- **Secretariat to Montreal Protocol to the Vienna Convention**
- **UN Office of Drugs and Crime**
- **World Customs Organization**
- **Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons**
- **International Criminal Police Organization**

# GCI's approach

- Coordinated delivery through the umbrella partnership (e.g. coordinated training)
- Structured interaction with the customs community for MEAs (role of the WCO)
- Sustainability of delivery:
  - Train-the-trainer approach
  - Incorporation of the green customs into national customs training curricula





# GCI activities

- **Capacity training workshops**  
(hundreds of customs officers trained)
- **Green customs curricula**
- **Awareness raising**  
[Green Customs website](#)
- **Resources**  
Green Customs Guide  
E-learning modules  
GCI partners' resources

# Examples: 1. Latin America and the Caribbean & Kenya green customs curricula



# Examples: 2. Awareness raising events



Side event, *"Focus on Legal Responses to Pollution,"* at Global Meeting of NFPs to the Montevideo Programme V (7 June 2022)



Side event, *"Greening Customs for People, Planet and Prosperity: The Case of Waste Management,"* at 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the CCPCJ (17 May 2022)

# 3. E-learning modules

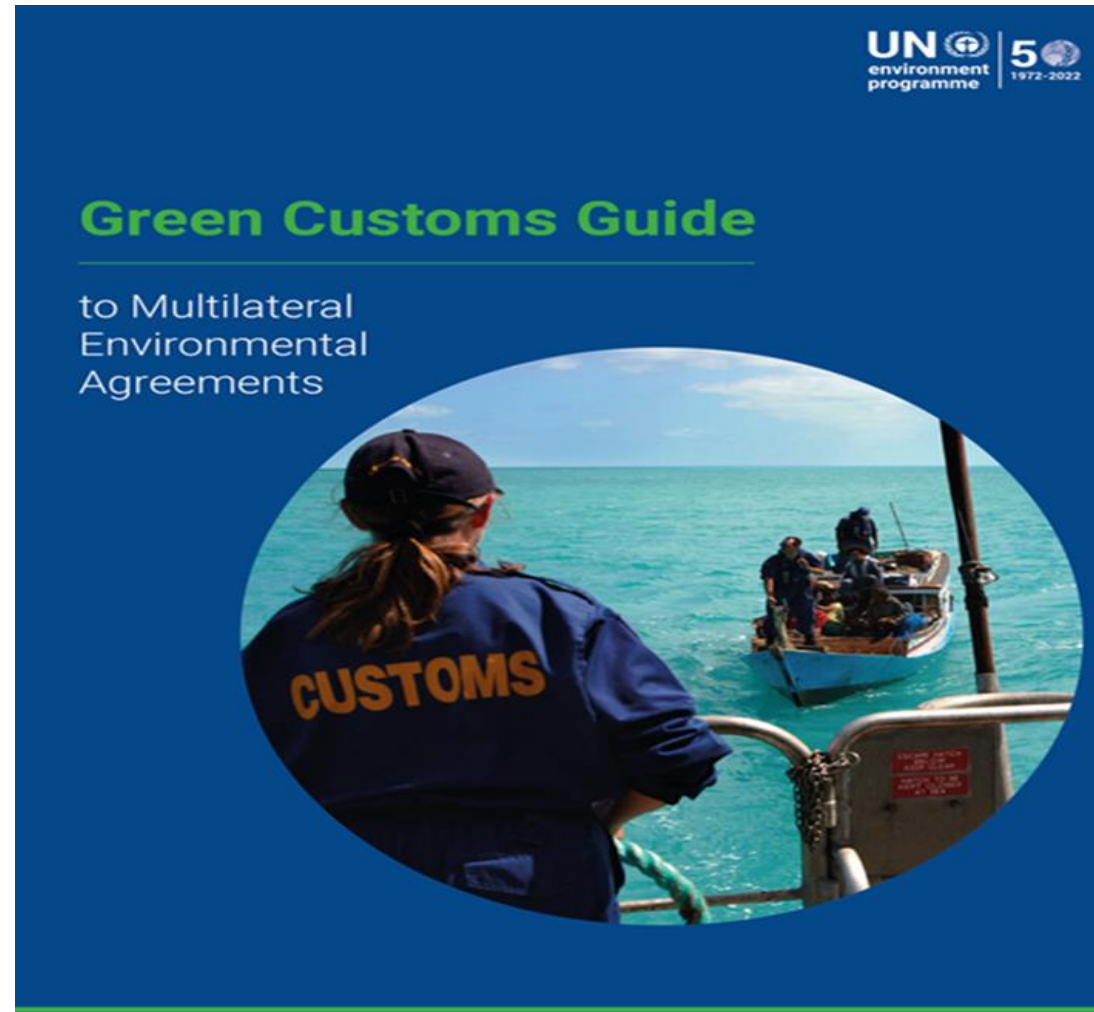


- Hosted on WCO training platform CLiCK!  
<http://clikc.wcoomd.org> and on GCI partners' websites

## Modules:

- GCI Introduction
- Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm
- Cartagena Protocol to Convention on Biological Diversity
- Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species
- Chemical weapons Convention
- Montreal Protocol

# 4. GCI Guide to MEAs



# 5. GCI website

The screenshot displays the website's navigation bar with links for Home, About Us, Partners, News & Events (highlighted), E-learning, Resources, and Contact Us. A search bar is located on the right. The main banner features a pangolin with the text 'NEWS & EVENTS' and a sub-header: 'Please find below the most recent news and events/activities carried out or to be carried out by the Green Customs Initiative or by its partners.' Below this is an 'EVENTS' section with tabs for 'Upcoming Events' and 'Past Events', a search bar, and a 'Calendar of Events' for January 2023. A chat icon is visible on the right side of the page.

# Key GCI messages

- **Customs officers are at front line of every country's defence against illegal trade, and the first link in the enforcement chain**
- **Adequate capacity of customs to prevent illegal trade will facilitate effective implementation of MEAs**
- **It is important for customs authorities to work closely together with other enforcement and environmental agencies to safeguard environmental security**



# Key GCI messages

<https://youtu.be/j6UMx8Ae8X8>



# Asante!

[www.greencustoms.org](http://www.greencustoms.org)

GCI Secretariat

[unep-greencustomsinitiative@un.org](mailto:unep-greencustomsinitiative@un.org)

Law Division of UN Environment Programme  
Nairobi, Kenya

